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SUBJECT: Southern Sudan--Conflict Threats in Urban Areas

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11. (U) Summary: USAID implementing partner Pact conducted a conflict analysis and threat assessment in Southern Sudan and the Three Areas. The focus of the assessment was on urban areas. A variety of threats that could lead to conflict were identified and presented to the South Sudan Peace Commission, Pact's government partner. Pact will use this analysis to plan its interventions. End Summary.

2.(U) USAID's partner, Pact, is implementing a five year program designed to target and mitigate conflict threats in key urban centers in South Sudan (Malakal, Juba and Aweil), and in the Three Areas (Kauda, Kadugli and Abyei.) Pact conducted a series of on-the-ground assessments in each location. Based on this information, Pact identified local actors and interventions to address the conflicts. Not all conflicts are within Pact's scope and mandate. Some of the identified issues will need to be resolved at the governmental level. The South Sudan Peace Commission supports Pact's analysis and has agreed to raise the issues to relevant GOSS and SPLA/M powerbrokers.

13. (U) Some of the conflict sources identified in the assessment apply across South Sudan and the Three Areas and are related to long-standing inter-ethnic tensions, political rivalries, tribalism, and access and competition for resources. Others are grounded in current political competition between the National Congress Party (NCP) and SPLM (Sudan People's Liberation Movement) and tensions between SAF and SPLA forces in the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs). In addition, Pact identified conflict threats that are specific to each of the six locations in which they are working, some of which are outlined below.

14. (U) Malakal, Upper Nile: Pact identified tensions between the Nuer and Shilluk communities in Malakal, which are based on long-standing historical conflicts, ethnic differences and false perceptions, as a potential source of localized conflict. There are issues of competition related to access to water and grazing rights, which are exacerbated by inter-ethnic tensions. Conflict related to county boundaries and tensions between Southern and Arab traders are based on competition for resources, inter-ethnic tensions, and the sense of historical inequity. The rivalry in Fangak (Jonglei state) between supporters of SSDF leader General Gabriel Chan (nicknamed Tangiena) and Commissioner John Maluit already led to violence in November 2006 and could lead to further conflict if not resolved. Conflicts between Dinka Ngok and Dinka Dongjol, as well as intra-Shilluk tensions are potentially more explosive due to the presence of arms among these groups. The formation and deployment of GoS-supported Oil Defense Forces around oil fields in Maban and

Malut counties in the northern part of Upper Nile are a further source of concern for residents of the state. And finally, tensions between returnees and residents are growing due to cultural clashes, competition for resources, and general vulnerability and poverty.

15. (U) Juba, Central Equatoria: Some of the potential areas of conflict in Juba are similar to those in other locations, such as the presence of armed groups, competition for land and grazing rights, tension around county boundaries, and competition for resources. However, Juba has specific issues that are related to its function as the capitol of Southern Sudan. Pact identified competition between the GOSS and the government of the state of Central Equatoria related to decentralization of power, lack of resources and inadequate service delivery, as a potential problem. Tensions around access to land and grazing rights are exacerbated by extensive "land grabbing" that is occurring in Juba town. SSPC concurred strongly with this point and even called land issues a complicated problem that could lead to violence and impact severely on both GOSS and the Government of Central Equatoria state. IDPs have established temporary accommodations around Juba and are being threatened with forcible removal. Corruption, the perception of tribal favoritism (perceived Dinka dominance of GOSS), alleged nepotism and economic changes (rise in prices of basic commodities, housing) highlight the gap between the wealthy and poor and could lead to lack of confidence in the GOSS and general discontent. Pact flagged a number of issues as potential areas of conflict, such as: (1) the plan to lay off 7,000 state-level civil servants in Central Equatoria state; (2) the 4,000 ex-Sudan Armed Forces members who refuse to join SAF and move to the north and now remain in Juba; and (3) rumblings about perceived trade dominance by foreigners in Juba's markets.

16. (U) Aweil, Northern Bahr e Ghazal: Aweil town, in which numerous tribes co-exist, has similar issues as Malakal and Juba. Among these are the slow integration of the SPLA and SAF forces into the JIU, competition over resources and perceived inter-ethnic inequities, abundance of arms, and perceptions of corruption and nepotism among civil servants. In addition, Pact identified tensions

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among youth, who feel alienated and have contributed to a rise in crime, in some cases through organized criminal activity. Northern Bahr e Ghazal is receiving a large number of returnees, either IDPs or returning refugees, who are coming back with differing levels of support. Many are being brought back by the state government, church groups or local organizations. They are returning to an inhospitable environment that can barely support the existing population. This is creating increased tensions and hardship for residents and returnees.

17. (U) Three Areas (Kauda, Kadugli, and Abyei): Pact noted that communities in the Three Areas were polarized around their affiliation with either the NCP or the SPLM. Similar to other locations, there are tensions between the SAF and SPLA forces in the JIUs. In Kauda and Agok, south of the Kiir River where the SPLA had its headquarters during the war, there are growing tensions within the SPLA due to pay discrepancies between SPLA "mother forces" and SPLA police. In Kadugli, there is friction between the SPLA and People's Defense Forces, a militia, which has not been disbanded or integrated into the SAF or SPLA. Similar to Aweil, there are concerns in both Kadugli and Kauda over idle and unemployed youth, some of whom joined the SPLA with the expectation of filling SPLM posts after the integration of the civil service. They are dissatisfied with the pace of the implementation of the CPA. Pact identified inter-ethnic conflicts and concerns about nepotism as a key issue in all three locations. In Kadugli, Pact believes that some ethnic groups (Julud and Hawazma) are feeling under-represented in governmental structures. In Kauda, according to Pact, the SPLA is under pressure to intervene to protect vulnerable Nuba communities from attacks by armed nomads in the areas of Kawaliib, Wernang, and Abu Kershola and the Goz area north west of Dilling. The lack of an agreed administration in Abyei is creating tensions among all ethnic groups and the lack of clarity on boundaries is intensifying competition and inter-ethnic rivalries for land access and grazing rights. In Kadugli, there are conflicts over access to gum Arabic harvesting.

18. (U) Pact has identified a number of local organizations in each location with which they plan to work on localized conflict resolution and reconciliation activities. Additionally, the SSPC will be utilizing the analysis to identify government-sponsored efforts to address conflicts and potential threats that are beyond the ability of Pact. The partnership between Pact and SSPC is growing into a constructive and supportive relationship. Pact will continue to work on refining its efforts to work with local groups and activities to target key threats that could impact on the implementation of the CPA at the local level.

FERNANDO